

Technology, Social Media, and Parenting

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How much is too much screen time

- Age 2 and under: avoid media use (except video chatting).
- Preschoolers: No more than one hour of high-quality programming per day.
- Grade-schoolers/Teens: Don't let media displace other important activities such as quality sleep, regular exercise, family meals, "unplugged" downtime.
- All ages: Be a media mentor. Co-view media with your kids.

(APA.org)

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Protect the Essentials: Sleep

- Infants 4 months to 12 months should sleep 12 to 16
- Children 1 to 2 years of age should sleep 11 to 14 hours
- Children 3 to 5 years of age should sleep 10 to 13 hours
- Children 6 to 12 years of age should sleep 9 to 12 hours
- Teenagers 13 to 18 years of age should sleep 8 to 10 hours

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Protect the Essentials: Boredom

- Boredom is essential in childhood!
 - Encourages imagination
 - Teaches grit
 - Develops problem solving skills
 - Helps form relationship skills
 - Improves confidence
 - Creates a sense of “belonging”
 - Protects mental health

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Protect the Essentials: Outdoors

- *30 to 60 minutes* of outdoor play time per day but even 10 minute “chunks” are a good idea.
- It builds confidence.
- It promotes creativity and imagination.
- It teaches responsibility.
- It provides different stimulation.
- It gets kids moving.
- It makes them think.
- It reduces stress and fatigue.

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Protect the Essentials: Family Time

- Meal-time
- Family play time
- Responsibility for chores
- Car time
- Model what you want to see

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What we can do

- Parents modeling healthy media use — including limiting phone interruptions.
- Design a plan with children that includes media free time and limits exposure one to two hours before bedtime.
- Co-viewing media and discussing it when possible, to enhance learning.
- Pandemic permissiveness
- What will we protect? Screens will seep into the rest.

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How to keep them safe

- Use parent controls – through internet carrier and through router, but trying to fight it with crafty tech can fail
- Secret spying on them can cause trouble – esp as they get older
- Say it....repeatedly.
- Watch and play with them
- Most importantly, TALK

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Snapchat, Instagram, TiK ToK are where it's at...for now

- Wait 'til 8
- Familiarize yourself with your adolescent's favorite social media by reading reviews or downloading it yourself and playing around with it.
- Friend your child as a condition of use, or have older cousins keep tabs
- Make time for regular check-ins when you can ask what's new on Tik ToK Snapchat and Insta and share your feeds with them.
- Talk to other parents, follow trends, Common Sense Media

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Upside of Social Media

- Kids feel connected – gives them a voice and a chance to participate in social issues
- Promotes creativity – posting drawings, poems, photography, art, even baking
- Helps isolated kids feel connected – building community for kids with disabilities, kids outside mainstream, AND in pandemic
- Useful in education – kids actually use it to study together or quiz each other
- Tik tok has “sides” that can be helpful or harmful. Know your kid's algorithm.

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Downside of Social Media

Threat

- Constant comparison
- Focus on superficial
- Anonymity breeds bad behavior
- Feeds insecurity
- Overly sexualized tik toks
- Predatory threat

What We can do

- TALK – show them reality vs. Instaimage
- TALK – remind them that too much time on this puts too much focus on the least important part of themselves
- Remind them they are not allowed to comment in a demeaning, insulting, way
- TALK about expressing yourself in a way that will not be embarrassing later
- Remind them that who someone says they are online may not be true. NO talking with strangers, no personal information

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Thumbs mostly up...from them

- Few say social media has a negative effect on how they feel about themselves
- 25% say social media makes them feel less lonely (3% say more)
- 18% say it makes them feel better about themselves (4% say worse)
- 16% say it makes them feel less depressed (3 % say more)
- **What you can do.**
- Check in
- Ask open-ended questions about their social media lives: What's good? What's not so good? What do you wish you could change?
- And remember, social media is only one contributor to kids' overall well-being.

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They won't stop

- 70% use social media more than once a day (34% in 2012).
 - Most adolescents think technology companies manipulate users to spend more time on their devices.
 - Many of them also think that social media distracts them and their friends.
- **What you can do.**
 - They know it's getting in the way of important things, but they have a hard time regulating their own use. So, help them!
 - Encourage them to be mindful of how they feel before, during, and after a social media session.
 - If a certain friend or topic bugs them or brings them down, they can block that person or mute the thread.
 - Challenge them to do a task with focused concentration and without getting distracted for longer and longer periods (set a timer!).

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Managing devices can be hit or miss.

- Many turn off, silence, or put away their phones at key times such as when going to sleep, having meals with people, visiting family, or doing homework.
 - But many others do not: A significant number of adolescents say they "hardly ever" or "never" silence or put away their devices.
- **What you can do**
 - If your adolescent is the kind who can manage their own use, keep encouraging them. If not, set specific screen rules for around the house.
 - Establish screen-free times (such as during homework) and areas (such as the bedroom). Have device-free-dinner nights -- and make sure to follow the rules yourself.

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Technology and Pornography

- 90% of 16-year-olds report having seen porn
- Widely available, easily accessed and can be hugely harmful – violent, anti-women, shocking, misrepresentation of human anatomy, objectifies, misrepresents normal sexual relationships,
- TALK about it before 10 years old
- Porn is NOT sex – it is acting
- Rules about no using phones or computers at other people's homes
- NO SCREENS IN BEDROOMS

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Technology and Pornography

- Tell them you need to talk about exposure to pornography when they first get a phone – this will last 2 minutes
- Kids are repulsed by and also interested in finding out about sex – confusing feelings
- Some older kids show younger kids because they are shocked and want to shock others
- Can make young kids afraid to tell you. They know it is wrong and they are worried about their curiosity
- Tell them you are there to talk, answer any questions, but don't go into detail. **2 MINUTES**

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Exposure to hate speech is on the rise, while cyberbullying is less common.

- Only 13% of teens report ever being cyberbullied.
- Nearly 2/3 say they often or sometimes come across hate content in social media.
- **What you can do.**
 - Talk to your kid about being a force for good on the internet.
 - Explain that it reflects poorly on them if they like, share, or otherwise support messages of hate -- even as a joke.
 - If your kid knows the person spewing hate speech, then encourage them to block, report, or simply unfriend that person.
 - Practice how to disagree with people respectfully and constructively.
 - Encourage them to stand up for people who've been denigrated -- without getting into an ugly flame war. How to be an interrupter or upstander instead of a bystander

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How to prevent Cyberbullying

- Keep home computer(s) in easily viewable places, such as the family room or kitchen.
- Talk regularly with children about their online activities and Internet etiquette in general.
- Talk specifically about cyberbullying and encourage children to notify adults immediately if they become victims of cyberbullying.
- Tell children that you may review their online communications if there is any reason for concern.
- Help children understand that cyberbullying is harmful and unacceptable behavior.
- Emphasize expectations for responsible online behavior and make clear the consequences for violations of Internet etiquette.

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Cyberbullies

- Just as likely to be female as male
- More likely to be older than younger teens
- Poor relationship with parents/caregivers
- More likely to be targets of traditional bullying
- More likely to engage in delinquent behavior
- More likely to be frequent/daily internet users
 - Vengeful angel
 - Power hungry
 - Mean girls
 - Inadvertent

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Cyberbully Victims

- As likely to be female as male
- likely to be older teens
- May be victims of traditional bullying
- Likely to be unpopular, isolated, depressed, anxious, and fearful
- likely to be searching for acceptance and attention
- more vulnerable to manipulation
- less attentive to Internet safety messages
- less resilient in dealing with a difficult situation,
- less able or willing to rely on parents
- Likely to have m/h issues

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What to do: Cyberbullying

- Clean up the instant messaging buddy list to help reduce the number of other people who have access to the victim's e-mail location.
- File a complaint with the website, Internet service provider (ISP), or cell phone company.
- Enlist the help of the school psychologist, school counselor, principal – try to work it out in a community approach, teach respectful dialogue, how to be an upstander.
- Contact an attorney if less drastic steps are ineffective.
- Contact the police if the cyberbullying includes threats of harm.

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What should parents do?

Parents play a key role in helping kids learn the same sense of responsibility and self-respect in their online world as they do in their offline worlds. Read [Tips for Social Networking](#) for helpful tips such as:

- **Talk often about life in the digital world and what it means to be a safe, smart digital citizen:** remind kids that online posts can last forever, and that potentially anyone can see them. If they wouldn't put something up in the hallway in school, they shouldn't post it on their pages.
- **Get yourself an account:** see for yourself how your kids' online world works – it'll be easier for you to understand what they're talking about.
- **Make sure your kids set privacy settings:** they aren't foolproof, but they're important
- **Set rules for what they can and can't say, post, and play online:** the bottom line – posts with drugs, drinking, sexual posing or activity will come back to haunt them. If they wouldn't say it to someone's face, they shouldn't post it.



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Resources

- **APA Digital Guidelines: Promoting Healthy Technology Use for Children**
<https://www.apa.org/topics/healthy-technology-use-children>
- **Media and Child Health Clinician Toolkit**
<http://cmch.tv/clinicians>
- **APA Div. 46 (Society for Media Psychology and Technology)**
www.apa.org/about/division/div46.aspx